THE CLAIMS

The claims of the application, as amended, are:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of imprint identification, comprising:

- obtaining, with a predetermined reproduction ratio, an image from an imprint

produced by an article; and

- recording the co-ordinates of identification features present in the image;

characterised by

- calculating the distances between such co-ordinates;

- storing a record of the distances thereby obtained in a database containing a number of

~~similar~~ records similarly obtained from other imprints; and

- comparing the distance information of the stored records to identify records likely to

have been derived from the same article.

2. (Original) A method of imprint identification according to Claim 1, in which

the records are retrieved from the database using search parameters which cover a

plurality of defined distance bands.

3. (Original) A method of imprint identification according to Claim 2, in which

the records are displayed on separate rows of a table with the distances arranged in

columns.

4. (Currently Amended) A method of imprint identification according to Claim 3, in which the distances are displayed in <u>ascending or descending</u> numerical order ~~(ascending or descending)~~.

5. (Original) A method of imprint identification according to Claim 3, in which distances which fall within the search parameters are visually distinguished.

6. (Original) A method of imprint identification according to Claim 1, in which the database includes downloadable images of the imprints.

7. (Original) A method of imprint identification according to Claim 1, in which the database contains the co-ordinates of the identification features from which the distance information is derived.

8. (Original) A method of imprint identification according to Claim 1, in which the database contains a further group of records containing distance information obtained directly from articles.

9. (New) A method of imprint identification, comprising:

- obtaining, with a predetermined reproduction ratio, an image from an imprint produced by an article; and

- recording the co-ordinates of identification features present in the image;

      characterised by

- calculating the distances between such co-ordinates;

- storing a record of the distances thereby obtained in a database;

- repeating the steps of obtaining an image from another imprint, recording the co-ordinates of identification features present in the image, calculating the distances between such co-ordinates and storing a record of the distances thereby obtained so that the database contains stored records from different imprints; and

- comparing the distance information of the stored records to identify records likely to have been derived from the same article.

10. (New) A method of imprint identification according to Claim 9, in which the records are retrieved from the database using search parameters which cover a plurality of defined distance bands.

11. (New) A method of imprint identification according to Claim 10, in which the records are displayed on separate rows of a table with the distances arranged in columns.

12. (New) A method of imprint identification according to Claim 11, in which the distances are displayed in ascending or descending numerical order.

13. (New) A method of imprint identification according to Claim 11, in which distances which fall within the search parameters are visually distinguished.

14. (New) A method of imprint identification according to Claim 9, in which the database includes downloadable images of the imprints.

15. (New) A method of imprint identification according to Claim 9, in which the database contains the co-ordinates of the identification features from which the distance information is derived.

16. (New) A method of imprint identification according to Claim 9, in which the database contains a further group of records containing distance information obtained directly from articles.